



Northern  
Territory  
Government

THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

# Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010-2012



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# Foreword

We are pleased to present the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012*.

The Northern Territory Government (NTG) reaffirms its strong commitment to employment and career development opportunities for Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory Public Sector (NTPS). The strategy identifies key focus areas that will drive attraction, recruitment, career development and advancement for Indigenous Australians.

This strategy will assist public sector agencies to stay focused on the priority areas, and work in partnership to achieve our goals. We want the NTPS to more closely reflect the make-up of the community it serves. This means employing more Indigenous people in all occupations, levels of employment and locations.

The initiatives, actions and goals set out in the strategy demonstrate our commitment to achieving better outcomes in employment and career development for Indigenous Australians.




Dr Chris Burns MLA  
Minister for Public Employment



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Minister for Indigenous Development

# Contents

Evaluation of the 2002–2006 strategy	1
Introduction	2
Purpose of the <i>Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012</i>	4
Indigenous employment in the NTPS	5
What do our Indigenous employees think?	6
Outcomes	7
Performance indicators	8
Key focus areas of the strategy	9
Key focus area 1: Workplace environment	9
Key focus area 2: Attraction	10
Key focus area 3: Retention	11
Key focus area 4: Communication	13
What is currently happening in agencies?	14
Implementation, reporting and review	18
Measuring performance	18
References	19
Cross-agency Implementation Plan 2010–2012	20
Commentary on the key actions outlined in the <i>Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012</i>	24



Northern Territory Public Sector  
**Indigenous Employment  
and Career Development  
Strategy 2010-2012**

# Evaluation of the 2002–2006 strategy

In 2007 the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2002–2006* was evaluated under Schedule 2.1 of the Charles Darwin University (CDU) and Northern Territory Government Partnership Agreement. The aim of the evaluation was to determine the effectiveness of Indigenous employment strategies across the public sector as a result of a sector-wide strategy.

The evaluation provided a framework for future direction that is based on past experiences, present expectations and future realisations for a public sector workforce that reflects the demographics of the community it serves.

An outcome of the evaluation of the 2002–2006 strategy was the following four key recommendations for consideration in the context of a future strategy:

1. A focused approach to increasing representation of Indigenous persons across the NTPS is required
2. Economic imperative for agency involvement must be recognised
3. Agencies should be involved in first formulating agency-specific strategies before a sector-wide strategy is determined
4. Agencies should internally strengthen their resolve for achieving sustainable shift in policy deliberation and implementation.

The benefits of investing in Indigenous employment include raising the profile of the NTPS by promoting it as an attractive employer and building its capacity to deliver services more effectively to Indigenous Territorians and the wider community.

# Introduction

The NTPS is one of the largest employers in the Territory, with over 18,000 staff employed in a broad range of occupations and professions. As a major employer, the public sector is in a unique position to contribute to improved social and economic outcomes for Indigenous Australians through increased employment levels and subsequent enhanced service delivery. We need to strive to achieve a public sector that reflects the diverse community it serves through culturally appropriate programs, policy development and service-delivery strategies.

*The Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012* has been developed in the context of research that acknowledges that ‘being employed leads to improved wealth and asset creation for Indigenous families and communities, which in turn has a positive influence on health and the education of children. It also enhances self-esteem, increases opportunities for self-development, influences interaction at the family and community levels and reduces social alienation.’<sup>1</sup>

Since the first strategy was introduced in 1995, agencies have embraced the notion that Indigenous employment is ‘everyone’s concern’ and is not limited to any one agency or section within an agency. There is awareness that each agency has a responsibility in this area and acknowledgement that there is a need for a whole-of-government approach to comprehensively address issues related to sustainable development of the Territory socially and economically.

*The Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012* is underpinned by the Australian and Northern Territory governments’ commitment to advancing Indigenous employment in the public sector and improving outcomes for the benefit of all Territorians.

In November 2008, the NTG confirmed its commitment to the Council of Australian Governments’ (COAG) *National Indigenous Reform Agreement*. This agreement establishes six targets aimed at closing the gap in Indigenous disadvantage. The target most relevant to the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012* is that which aims **‘to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade’**.

The *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation* that underpins the COAG agreement commits to **‘reviewing all public sector**

<sup>1</sup> Council of Australian Governments meeting, Canberra, 29 November 2008, ‘Communique’

**Indigenous and career development strategies to increase employment to reflect population share by 2015'**. More specifically, the agreement commits to the national COAG target of at least 2.6 per cent of public sector employment for Indigenous employment across classifications by 2015 in order to increase employment reflective of the expected national Indigenous working age population share. The Northern Territory and Australian governments further agree to commit to implement public sector Indigenous employment strategies to assist in achieving the national target, to employ up to 8,000 Indigenous people, noting that jurisdiction-specific targets are to be developed and agreed. These targets will take into account the variation in the proportion of Indigenous population across States and Territories.<sup>2</sup>

The Implementation Plan for the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation* also includes the existing NTG commitment to increase the proportion of Indigenous Australians employed in the NTPS to at least 10 per cent by 2012.

Many agencies already have strategies to address workforce diversity. However, a strategy specifically for attracting, retaining and developing Indigenous Australians across government will provide for more focused and targeted action.

The initiatives set out in the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012* require considerable investment of commitment, goodwill, and financial and human resources. For it to be successful, a strong commitment to employment and career development opportunities for Indigenous Australians is required across agencies. All agencies have responsibility for addressing the focus areas outlined in the strategy. In particular, chief executives and senior managers must meet the challenge of enhancing Indigenous employment in their agency. Indigenous employment needs to be incorporated into all business planning, workforce strategies and executive contract officers' performance reviews. The acceptance, encouragement and fostering of diversity within our public sector is essential if we are to achieve status as an attractive employer and employer of choice for Indigenous Australians.

The overall aim of the strategy is to increase Indigenous public sector employment across all employment occupational groups, levels, locations and employment arrangements; improve Indigenous economic participation; and work towards a workforce profile that reflects Indigenous working age population share. It identifies how our public sector will move forward through improved representation of Indigenous Australians throughout the Territory.

<sup>2</sup> *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation*, Council of Australian Governments. 4 May 2009, viewed 26 June 2009, <[http://www.coag.gov.au/intergov\\_agreements/federal\\_financial\\_relations/docs/national\\_partnership/national\\_partnership\\_on\\_indigenous\\_economic\\_participation.rtf](http://www.coag.gov.au/intergov_agreements/federal_financial_relations/docs/national_partnership/national_partnership_on_indigenous_economic_participation.rtf)>



# Purpose of the Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012

Our purpose is to improve the NTPS's attraction and retention of Indigenous employees through leadership, effective recruitment, career development and the engendering of cultural respect. A concerted effort not only to attract Indigenous employees but retain and grow Indigenous employees is critical to the success of the strategy.

The strategy embeds the principles and outcomes in other strategies and agreements that deliver Indigenous key priority areas, namely:

- *Working Future*
- *Indigenous Economic Development Strategy 2009–2012*
- *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation*
- Framework for Jobs NT (Draft).

# Indigenous employment in the NTPS

The employment of Indigenous Australians in our public sector continues to increase gradually. As at December 2009, the number of employees self-identifying as Indigenous represents 8.0 per cent (1581 employees) of our workforce. This is an increase of 3.0 percentage points since the introduction of the *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2002–2006*.

The following table reflects Indigenous employment in the public sector since 2003.

	June 2003	June 2004	June 2005	June 2006	June 2007	June 2008	June 2009	Dec 2009
<b>Identified Indigenous Territorians in the NTPS</b>	5.0%	5.7%	6.6%	6.9%	7.3%	7.7%	8.1%	8.0%



# What do our Indigenous employees think?

In September 2008, the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment hosted the 'We Need Your Help' forum, facilitated by a local Indigenous consultant. The forum was specifically designed for Indigenous employees from urban, rural, regional and remote workplaces to workshop ideas on three themes: attraction, retention and communication in our workforce. Feedback was prioritised by participants against four questions:

Why is employing Indigenous people in the NTPS important?

- Provides a chance to influence policy and outcomes – Indigenous people have a voice
- Reflects the diversity of the Northern Territory population and service users
- Indigenous people have secure mainstream employment and improved health and wellbeing
- Provides good role models and mentors for young Indigenous people.

What attracts Indigenous people to work in the NTPS?

- Real job, secure income, working conditions – can buy a house and look after the family
- Chance to make a difference for Indigenous people and influence policy
- Availability of professional development and training, career path, mobility.

What will help retain Indigenous people in the NTPS?

- Job satisfaction and pride, variety of work, sense of making a difference
- Flexible working conditions and access to cultural leave
- Professional development and training, opportunities for higher duties (on-site training).

What communication strategies will be effective?

- Establish an email and internet network for Indigenous staff
- Reinstate Indigenous Employment Adviser position within the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment as a key communication point.

# Outcomes

The outcomes sought through the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012* include:

- An increased representation of Indigenous Australians across all employment occupational groups, levels, locations and employment arrangements
- A workforce with workplaces that recognise and respect Indigenous culture and values.



# Performance indicators

The following performance indicators will be used to measure the effectiveness of the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012*:

- An increase in the representation of Indigenous Australians employed in the NTPS to at least 10 per cent by 2012<sup>3</sup>
- An increase in representation of Indigenous Australians across all employment occupational groups, levels, locations and employment arrangements
- An increase in the number of Indigenous Australians applying for NTPS jobs
- An increase in the number of Indigenous Australians employed across non-traditional occupations/classifications
- A reduction in the attrition rate of Indigenous employees in the NTPS
- The biennial NTPS Employee Survey to report on improvements in Indigenous employment in the NTPS from 2009 to 2011
- All NTPS agencies to have an agency-specific Indigenous employment and career development strategy inclusive of a public sector employment profile in Territory Growth Towns
- All executive contract officers' annual performance reviews to include provision to report on individual efforts and contribution to improving Indigenous employment.

<sup>3</sup> Implementation Plan for *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation*

# Key focus areas of the strategy

The strategy has four key focus areas to guide targeted attention, and identifies priority actions against each focus area. The key focus areas are:

1. Workplace environment
2. Attraction
3. Retention
4. Communication.

Each agency is responsible for developing its own specific strategy based on the four key focus areas.

## ***Key focus area 1: Workplace environment***

The NTG is committed to providing a supportive and culturally inclusive workplace environment for all public sector employees. In particular, we need to recognise and respect Indigenous people, actively promote the importance of cultural identity, improve cross-cultural understanding and engender mutual respect.

Agency-specific actions will be beneficial to achieving change, and will involve developing initiatives to ensure workplaces are well equipped to welcome and support Indigenous employees, which will lead to higher retention rates.

Showing respect for cultural differences, needs and expectations of Indigenous Australians will greatly enhance our reputation as an attractive employer and an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians.

In a practical sense, our proposed workplace environment will be achieved through:

- 1.1 Providing cross-cultural training for all public sector employees
- 1.2 Developing and implementing agency-specific Indigenous employment and career development strategies under the four key focus areas – workplace environment, attraction, retention and communication, inclusive of agency employment profiles in Territory Growth Towns

- 1.3 Identifying agency champions as the drivers of the *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy*
- 1.4 Identifying Indigenous employment and career development coordinators in agencies as support for the agency champion and the day-to-day coordination of the *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy*
- 1.5 Promoting flexible work practices and leave provisions to assist Indigenous employees to meet cultural and family responsibilities, within operational requirements
- 1.6 Developing whole-of-government 'Welcome to Country' guidelines for recognising Indigenous culture and custodianship of country
- 1.7 Encouraging all employees to participate in events that celebrate Indigenous culture
- 1.8 Amending the definition of merit in the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* to value diversity in the workplace
- 1.9 Incorporating into executive contract officers' annual performance reviews greater accountability in and a commitment to improving Indigenous employment outcomes in the NTPS, requiring executive contract officers to report on individual contributions and progress in this area
- 1.10 Examining agency operations to transfer urban and regional public sector based work to Territory Growth Towns.

## ***Key focus area 2: Attraction***

The Department of Business and Employment manages several employment programs to attract Indigenous Australians, namely the Indigenous Cadetship Support, the Apprenticeship, Graduate and Indigenous Employment programs. These employment programs are a valuable vehicle for entry-level positions. However, increased efforts are needed to recruit Indigenous Territorians into other classifications and occupations. There is a lack of representation of Indigenous employees at the middle and senior manager levels, as well as in non-traditional occupations.

The recruitment process can be daunting and overwhelming for people who are not familiar with it, particularly Indigenous people. Agencies are encouraged to review their recruitment processes to ensure they are culturally appropriate and effective, and consider alternative methods for reaching Indigenous people. Word of mouth is a proven communication method of reaching Indigenous jobseekers.

The development of initiatives to attract and recruit Indigenous Australians from regional and remote areas of the Northern Territory to the public sector is a challenge for all agencies.

In a practical sense, the attraction of Indigenous Australians to the NTPS will be achieved through:

- 2.1 Developing a whole-of-government Indigenous employment marketing strategy to attract Indigenous Australians to the NTPS
- 2.2 Developing pathways to real jobs for Year 12 Indigenous school leavers and apprentices/trainees by matching successful applicants who have completed an employment program to ongoing employment opportunities across the NTPS
- 2.3 Encouraging and supporting Indigenous students to take up careers in the NTPS through employment programs such as school-based apprenticeships, traineeships and Indigenous Cadetship Support
- 2.4 Establishing a whole-of-government Indigenous scholarship program specifically to encourage Indigenous people into non-traditional employment streams
- 2.5 Encouraging agencies to participate in the Adopt a School Program
- 2.6 Including in all selection criteria for NTPS vacancies the criterion: 'An ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures'.

### ***Key focus area 3: Retention***

A key to success is to recognise that a one-size approach does not fit all, and that retention programs need to be tailored to accommodate the Indigenous workforce.

Induction processes and support for introducing Indigenous employees to the workplace will ensure that new recruits feel welcome and part of the team.

Retention comes from better career paths, recognition, opportunities for career development and a sense of personal achievement.

Providing access to learning and development programs contributes to an employee's sense of being valued and respected by the agency. Indigenous career development programs will encourage career opportunities and build leadership potential.





Mentoring is a valuable means of supporting new and existing employees in learning about government; the role, business and culture of an agency; and to achieving professional goals.

In a practical sense, it is proposed that improved retention will be achieved through:

- 3.1 Recognising the achievements and contributions of Indigenous employees through the establishment of an Indigenous career ambassadors program
- 3.2 Developing an Indigenous mentoring program and establishing a network of trained mentors in the public sector available to new and existing Indigenous employees
- 3.3 Reinvigorating NTPS Indigenous leadership programs to accommodate the emerging needs of Indigenous employees, and considering alternative models of leadership development
- 3.4 Improving career progression of Indigenous employees across the public sector to enable effective contribution to policy and decision-making affecting Indigenous people

- 3.5 Developing agency-specific induction programs to acknowledge that new Indigenous employees may need additional workplace support to sensitively introduce them to a new and culturally unfamiliar environment
- 3.6 Implementing a buddy scheme where a new Indigenous employee is twinned with an appropriate support person in the workplace.

### ***Key focus area 4: Communication***

In order to successfully attract and retain Indigenous employees, we need to improve our communication with Indigenous Territorians. Regular monitoring and reporting on Indigenous employment reinforces our commitment to understand attraction and retention and improve our efforts. We need to recognise achievements and celebrate successes to promote the benefits of Indigenous employment and continue to inspire and motivate others. Sharing stories helps create positive and inclusive workplaces.

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment as the central agency is responsible for the public sector employment framework and for the provision of informative, useful data relating to Indigenous employment. Agencies have the responsibility for ensuring the quality and accuracy of data to report against the performance indicators outlined in this strategy.

In a practical sense, it is proposed that improved communication will be achieved through:

- 4.1 Improving the integrity and provision of public sector employment data used for reporting on Indigenous workforce planning, development and profiling by nominating an annual census day to encourage Indigenous employees to self-identify
- 4.2 Establishing an electronic register of Indigenous employees interested in receiving information on employment and career development opportunities in the NTPS
- 4.3 Developing a communications and engagement strategy to promote the Indigenous Employees Network and Indigenous Employment and Career Development Coordinators Network
- 4.4 Improving communication and engagement with key stakeholders [CDU and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), career advisers, job services and registered training organisations] to increase Indigenous employment in the NTPS
- 4.5 Promoting employment opportunities and programs to attract BIITE and CDU Indigenous graduates to the NTPS.

# What is currently happening in agencies?

Agencies continue to show commitment and dedication to actively working towards increasing the number of Indigenous Australians in our public sector through agency-specific programs and initiatives.

A summary of current agency programs and initiatives follows.

The table below summarises the employment programs centrally administered by the Department of Business and Employment in 2009–2010.

	As at February 2010			
	School-based Apprentices	Apprentices	Indigenous Cadetship Support Program	More Indigenous Teachers
Identified as Indigenous Australian	15	97	53	11

The following shows the number of apprentices identifying as Indigenous Australian by location in 2009–2010.

Locations of Apprentices					
Alice Springs	18	Gapuwiyak*	1	Ramingining*	1
Borroloola*	2	Hermannsburg*	2	Tennant Creek	2
Cobourg	2	Katherine	7	Yirrkala*	2
Darwin	67	Mary River	1	Yuendumu	2
Douglas Daly	1	Mataranka	2	<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>
Elliott*	1	Milingimbi*	1		

\*Territory Growth Town

### **Department of Business and Employment**

Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs and manages cross-cultural training programs and access to career development opportunities for employees.

The Employment Division is responsible for:

- leading the implementation of Northern Territory employment strategies and has a role in implementing national employment strategies for equity groups in the Territory
- coordinating the *National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation*
- facilitating and promoting the Australian Employment Covenant.

### **Department of the Chief Minister**

Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs and provides cross-cultural training for staff.

### **Department of Education and Training**

Is committed to increasing the recruitment and retention of Indigenous Territorians. Developed the 'More Indigenous Teachers' program that aims to address some of the challenges in recruiting and retaining quality teaching staff to remote communities by assisting Indigenous Territorians to become teachers and encouraging Indigenous students to consider a career in teaching.

Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs and also offers Indigenous scholarships, fellowships and an Indigenous leadership program.

### **Department of Health and Families**

Creating a workforce that is affirming of Aboriginal culture and values and that seeks to create targeted and general employment and career opportunities for Indigenous Territorians. Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs and has developed the 'Stepping Up' Indigenous leadership program. Provides access to professional development and has set up internal networks to provide avenues for Indigenous employees to exchange ideas and to support each other.

Developed the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Workforce Plan 2008–2011*.

### **Department of Justice**

Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs, delivers cross-cultural training, and provides access to training and development opportunities for Indigenous employees.

### **Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services**

Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support, Apprenticeship and Indigenous Interpreter programs. Indigenous staff have access to relevant career development training and greater opportunities within the agency for career enhancement. Developed and is implementing an *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy*.

### **Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport**

Developed and is implementing an *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy*. Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs. Apprenticeships are offered in agency-specific areas such as horticulture, tourism, conservation and land management, business, zoo keeping, guiding and park rangers. In addition to adult apprenticeships, runs a School-based Apprenticeship Program focusing on Indigenous youth from regional and remote areas. Established an in-house Indigenous Reference Group to assist with activities and strategies around Indigenous employment and career development. The Parks Division works with Traditional Owners of jointly managed parks to establish traineeships and employment opportunities for people on-country. Professional development opportunities and mentoring workshops are also available for Indigenous employees.

### **Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment**

Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs. Responsible for the Kigaruk Indigenous Men's Leadership Development Program and the Lookrukin Indigenous Women's Leadership Development Program for all Indigenous employees.

### **Department of Lands and Planning and Department of Construction and Infrastructure**

Actively facilitates the skill development and employment of Indigenous Territorians in their core business industry areas. Participates in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs and provides sponsorship to encourage young Indigenous students with an aptitude in maths, science and technology to consider engineering as a career. Works with local government and community councils to encourage workforce participation.

### **Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

Established an Indigenous Policing Development Division – Yidiyu Initiative. The role of the division is to deliver the Aboriginal Community Police Officer Program and the transitional programs to Constable. The division has responsibility for Indigenous policy development and for assisting Indigenous employees within the Tri-Service. Supports the Australian School-based Apprenticeship programs.

### **Power and Water Corporation**

Supports employees in the Apprenticeship, Essential Services Traineeships and Graduate programs. Provides on-site training and mentoring and has a strong focus on employing and developing Indigenous employees, especially in remote areas.

### **Department of Resources**

Developed and is implementing an *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2009–2012*. Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs and offers apprenticeship opportunities including horticulture, aquaculture (seafood), laboratory skills, rural operations and business, and additionally supports the Aboriginal Marine Rangers and Indigenous Pastoral programs.

Provides access to professional development opportunities and promotes the agency as a good place for Indigenous people to work. Established a mentoring program to support early career participants.

### **Tourism NT**

Offers an Indigenous Tour Guide Program, which is a 12-week program that provides participants with tourism guiding skills in presenting flora, fauna, heritage and interpretive talks. Cultural awareness training is available. Mentors are available to provide assistance and support to Indigenous employees. Supports employees in the Indigenous Cadetship Support and Apprenticeship programs as well as Indigenous staff having access to relevant career development activities. Developed and implemented the Tourism NT *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy*.

### **Northern Territory Treasury**

Offers a number of entry-level programs to which Indigenous applicants are encouraged to apply, including the Indigenous Cadetship Support, Apprenticeship and Graduate programs, and the Work Integrated Learning Scholarships in accounting and economics.

# Implementation, reporting and review

The Implementation Plan details specific initiatives and actions to increase the number of Indigenous Australians and to retain Indigenous employees in the public sector. The plan reflects multi-agency support and identifies lead agency responsibility.

As part of the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012*, the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment will publish quarterly data on Indigenous employment trends, by agency and whole-of-government. A new reporting format will assist agencies in monitoring their progress and form the basis of the evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategy.

The annual NTPS *State of the Service Report* will be used to report against the strategy's performance indicators.

The biennial NTPS Employee Survey will include reports on improvements in Indigenous employment in the NTPS from 2009 to 2011.

## Measuring performance

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the *Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2010–2012*. This will involve cooperating with agencies through the Indigenous employment and career development coordinators and the Indigenous employees networks. Agencies will report annually to the Commissioner for Public Employment on progress against the strategy's four key focus areas.

# References

'Evaluation of the effectiveness and implementation of the IECDS 2002–2006 report', Charles Darwin University, 2007

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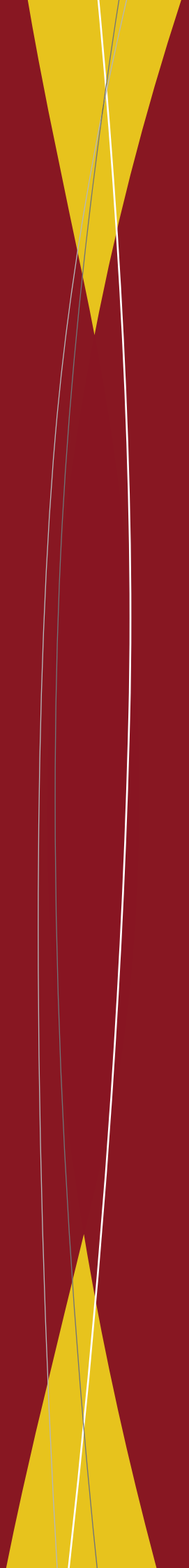
*State of the Service Report 2008–2009*, Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment

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*Building an Indigenous Employment Strategy: a starter kit for APS agencies*, Australian Public Service Commission, 2008

Mission Australia final report, Northern Territory Public Sector Indigenous Recruitment, 2005





**Cross-agency  
Implementation  
Plan 2010–2012**

## KEY FOCUS AREA 1: WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

No.	Key action	Time frame	Responsibility
1.1	Provide cross-cultural training for all public sector employees	Ongoing	All agencies
1.2	Develop and implement agency-specific Indigenous employment and career development strategies under the four key focus areas of workplace environment, attraction, retention and communication inclusive of Territory Growth Towns	August 2010	All agencies
1.3	Identify agency champions as the drivers of the <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i>	May 2010	All agencies
1.4	Identify Indigenous employment and career development coordinators in agencies as support for the Agency Champion and the day-to-day coordination of the <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i>	May 2010	All agencies
1.5	Promote flexible work practices and leave provisions to assist Indigenous employees to meet cultural and family responsibilities within operational requirements	Ongoing	All agencies
1.6	Develop whole-of-government 'Welcome to Country' guidelines for recognising Indigenous culture and custodianship of country	May 2010	OCPE
1.7	Encourage all employees to participate in events that celebrate Indigenous culture	Ongoing	All agencies
1.8	Amend the definition of merit in the <i>Public Sector Employment and Management Act</i> to value diversity in the workplace	In conjunction with legislative reform of the PSEMA	OCPE
1.9	Incorporate into executive contract officers' annual performance reviews greater accountability in and a commitment to improving Indigenous employment outcomes in the NTPS, requiring executive contract officers to report on individual contributions and progress in this area	July 2010	All agencies
1.10	Examine agency operations to transfer urban and regional based public sector work to Territory Growth Towns	Ongoing	All agencies

## KEY FOCUS AREA 2: ATTRACTION

No.	Key action	Time frame	Responsibility
2.1	Develop a whole-of-government Indigenous employment marketing strategy to attract Indigenous Australians to the NTPS	August 2010	OCPE/DCM
2.2	Develop pathways to real jobs for Year 12 Indigenous school leavers and apprentices/trainees by matching successful applicants who have completed an employment program to ongoing employment opportunities across the NTPS	July 2010	All agencies
2.3	Encourage and support Indigenous students to take up careers in the NTPS through employment programs such as school-based apprenticeships, traineeships and Indigenous Cadetship Support	Ongoing	OCPE/DBE
2.4	Establish a whole-of-government Indigenous scholarship program specifically to encourage Indigenous people into non-traditional employment streams such as professional and technical streams	January 2011	OCPE
2.5	Encourage agency participation in Adopt a School Program	Ongoing	OCPE
2.6	Include in all selection criteria for NTPS vacancies the criterion: 'An ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures'	August 2010	All agencies



### KEY FOCUS AREA 3: RETENTION

No.	Key action	Time frame	Responsibility
3.1	Recognise the achievements and contributions of Indigenous employees through the establishment of an Indigenous career ambassadors program	December 2010	OCPE/All agencies
3.2	Develop an Indigenous mentoring program and establish a network of trained mentors available to new and existing Indigenous employees	February 2011	OCPE
3.3	Reinvigorate NTPS Indigenous leadership programs to accommodate the emerging needs of Indigenous employees, and consider alternative models of leadership development	May 2010	OCPE
3.4	Improve career progression of Indigenous employees across the public sector to enable effective contribution to policy and decision-making affecting Indigenous people	Ongoing	All agencies
3.5	Develop agency-specific induction programs to acknowledge that new Indigenous employees may need additional workplace support to sensitively introduce them to a new and culturally unfamiliar environment	September 2010	All agencies
3.6	Implement a buddy scheme where a new Indigenous employee is twinned with an appropriate support person in the workplace	October 2010	OCPE

### KEY FOCUS AREA 4: COMMUNICATION

No.	Key action	Time frame	Responsibility
4.1	Improve the integrity and provision of public sector employment data used for reporting on Indigenous workforce planning, development and profiling by nominating an annual census day to encourage Indigenous employees to self-identify	Ongoing	OCPE
4.2	Establish an electronic register of Indigenous employees interested in receiving information on employment and career opportunities in the NTPS	June 2010	OCPE
4.3	Develop a communications and engagement strategy to promote the Indigenous Employees Network and Indigenous Employment and Career Development Coordinators Network	June 2010	OCPE
4.4	Improve communication and engagement with key stakeholders [Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Indigenous Institute of Tertiary Education (BIITE), career advisers, job services and registered training organisations] to increase Indigenous employment in the public sector	Ongoing	OCPE
4.5	Promote employment opportunities and programs to attract BIITE and CDU Indigenous graduates to the NTPS	Ongoing	All agencies

# Commentary on the key actions

# Key focus area 1: workplace environment

## 1.1 Provide cross-cultural training for all public sector employees

Rationale	<p>Through the <i>National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation</i> the parties aspire to halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade.</p> <p>Providing cross-cultural training to increase understanding within the workplace by non-Indigenous employees of the culture, society and history of Indigenous Australians is considered vital in our public sector given our high population of Indigenous Territorians. It also demonstrates a respect for Indigenous culture and enhances our reputation as an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians.</p> <p>An environmental scan showed almost every jurisdiction in Australia has some form of cultural training in place for public sector employees. These training programs are considered successful with non-Indigenous employees, particularly in providing them with an understanding of cultural backgrounds and expectations.</p>
How	<p>The Department of Business and Employment has responsibility for coordinating the provision of three cross-cultural training programs.</p> <p>Agencies may also conduct cultural training to meet their agency-specific needs.</p> <p>Agencies to be responsible for reporting attendance at cross-cultural training for all new and existing employees.</p>
Success factors	<p>A workforce that values our rich cultural heritage, and possesses an enhanced knowledge and awareness of, and competence in, working with Indigenous Australians in an environment of mutual respect.</p>

## 1.2 Develop and implement agency-specific Indigenous employment and career development strategies under the four key focus areas – workplace environment, attraction, retention and communication – inclusive of Territory Growth Towns

Rationale	<p>It is a legislative requirement for agencies to have in place Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) management plans (Employment Instruction No. 11 of the <i>Public Sector Employment and Management Act</i> refers).</p> <p>No longer is it only an EEO imperative to attract and retain Indigenous Australians. There is also an economic imperative for engaging more Indigenous persons in the NTPS. The economic imperative is now an underlying reason for maintaining a strong focus on Indigenous employment and career enhancement of Indigenous persons. The fundamental shift in focus is due to ageing populations and skills shortages.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Calls are being made for agencies to devise their own Indigenous employment strategies as an opportunity to develop a strategic approach to workforce challenges and actively attract and engage Indigenous persons. It is also a requirement of the <i>National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation</i> to incorporate Indigenous workforce strategies into all new major Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) reforms contributing to the Closing the Gap targets. Agency-specific strategies will also assist to improve economic participation in the Territory Growth Towns.</p> <p>Agency-specific strategies can also help agencies to build the skills of their Indigenous employees so that they are more confident and capable in developing and delivering services to Territorians.</p>
How	<p>Agencies to adopt a proactive approach to Indigenous employment by developing and implementing their own strategies under the four key focus areas of workplace environment, attraction, retention and communication. Strategies to be linked to relevant corporate strategic and business plans to embed the commitment of Indigenous employment in the agency's corporate priorities and become part of the everyday way of doing business. Improving economic participation in the Territory Growth Towns to feature in the annual State of the Service Report.</p>
Success factors	<p>Meaningful and relevant agency-specific strategies that reflect the values, business objectives and priority actions to actively attract, engage and nurture Indigenous employees.</p>

4. Evaluation of the effectiveness and implementation of the NTPS Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy 2002–2006, Charles Darwin University, 2007

### 1.3 Identify agency champions as the drivers of the *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy*

Rationale	<p>A strong commitment at executive and management levels is essential to the success of an <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i>. Evidence suggests that employees take behavioural cues from what managers do, more than what they say. Senior managers seen to be actively supporting Indigenous employment can significantly improve outcomes of an Employment and Career Development Strategy.</p> <p>It is well known that one of the key success factors of strategies is in having a senior champion within organisations who promotes the strategy, talks to agency senior executives and makes sure key priorities and actions are implemented in an appropriate way.</p> <p>An agency champion can drive the importance of cultural identity and a workplace of mutual respect.</p>
How	<p>Agencies to be responsible for identifying senior level champion(s) to drive their Employment and Career Development Strategy. The role of the agency champion will typically be held by an agency senior executive or by the agency head. An agency champion is the human face of an Employment and Career Development Strategy; someone who reinforces the agency's commitment to support and develop its Indigenous workforce. The role of agency champions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promoting Indigenous employment and career development within the agency and externally</li><li>• Providing strategic direction, support and encouragement for initiatives under an Employment and Career Development Strategy</li><li>• Ensuring Indigenous employment matters are on the agency agenda in high-level planning</li><li>• Working closely with the agency's Indigenous employment and career development coordinator, the person responsible for the day-to-day coordination of the strategy.</li></ul>
Success factors	<p>Agencies focused on recognising the importance of cultural identity and developing an environment of mutual respect.</p>



#### 1.4 Identify Indigenous employment and career development coordinators in agencies as support for the agency champion and the day-to-day coordination of the *Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy*

Rationale	<p>While the agency champion(s) provides the strategic direction and support for the <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i>, identifying coordinators will ensure that initiatives undertaken in an agency take a practical daily effect. It will also promote connectivity within the agency and stimulate communication channels to enhance involvement at all levels.</p> <p>The key role of an Indigenous employment and career development coordinator is to support the agency champion(s) in the day-to-day coordination of the <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i>. Ideally, the coordinator would have a sound understanding of their agency's strategy and how it fits with the overarching business objectives of the agency, together with a sound knowledge of the employment and career opportunities available within the agency and the broader NTPS.</p>
How	<p>Agencies to be responsible for identifying Indigenous employment and career development coordinators and supporting them in this role. Coordinators' activities may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contributing to the development of the agency's <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i></li><li>• Working with HR staff to develop and implement effective, targeted recruitment and retention strategies</li><li>• Working closely with other agencies to ensure the agency's strategy and programs draw on best practice</li><li>• Contributing to the induction process of new Indigenous employees, including introducing them to other Indigenous staff and advising them about relevant networks</li><li>• Advising Indigenous employees of relevant policies and terms and conditions of employment</li><li>• Advising of relevant learning and development opportunities</li><li>• Supporting Indigenous employees in times of need</li><li>• Raising issues of concern when needed through appropriate channels</li><li>• Networking with other Indigenous employment and career development coordinators across government</li><li>• Assisting with the evaluation of the <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i>.</li></ul>
Success factors	<p>More cohesive and proactive environments that are addressing and enhancing workforce capabilities in the context of Indigenous Australians.</p>

## 1.5 Promote flexible working practices and leave provisions to assist Indigenous employees to meet cultural and family responsibilities within operational requirements

**Rationale** Indigenous employees often face work-life-balance challenges due to their unique cultural heritage. Generally speaking, a lack of understanding of Indigenous cultural and family responsibilities in the workplace can lead to anxiety and frustration for Indigenous employees. These feelings can often translate to an increase in workplace absenteeism and Indigenous employees simply leaving the public sector.

The NTPS has a wide range of flexible working arrangements that are available for employees. Improving managers', supervisors' and Indigenous employees' awareness of flexible work arrangements and available leave provisions will achieve better outcomes.

**How** Agencies to consider the use of current leave entitlements and flexible working arrangements to enable Indigenous employees to meet cultural and family responsibilities.

Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop guidelines for managers and Indigenous employees promoting leave provisions and flexible work practices relevant to Indigenous employees' needs. The guidelines will also include case studies to convey meaningful examples that highlight the mutual benefits of flexible arrangements.

**Success factors** A workforce that values our rich cultural heritage and an enhanced knowledge and awareness of the cultural and family responsibilities of Indigenous employees. A workplace that recognises the importance of cultural identity and an environment of mutual respect.



## 1.6 Develop whole-of-government 'Welcome to Country' guidelines for recognising Indigenous culture and custodianship of country

Rationale	<p>Arranging a Welcome to Country ceremony that acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land shows respect for Indigenous people. Ceremonies and protocols are a fundamental part of Indigenous culture.</p> <p>Valuing and respecting appropriate Indigenous ceremony are vital to increasing the understanding and mutual respect for cultural practices by both Indigenous Australians and the wider community.</p> <p>There is no formalised protocol of this nature in place in the NTPS, and agencies are often not confident in the most culturally appropriate manner in which to recognise Indigenous culture and custodianship of country at formal public sector gatherings.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment in consultation with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services (Office of Indigenous Policy) to develop and publish a whole-of-government Welcome to Country protocol that recognises and acknowledges the traditional owners of country.</p>
Success factors	<p>Recognition of the traditional owners of country assists in developing strong partnerships with Indigenous people and demonstrates commitment of the NTG to strengthening ties between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.</p> <p>A Welcome to Country protocol heightens awareness of appropriately acknowledging traditional owners at formal events and functions. It will also serve to demystify the process and convey acceptable procedures for the use of consistent messages and acknowledgements for NTPS agencies and the NTG.</p>

## 1.7 Encourage all employees to participate in events that celebrate Indigenous culture

Rationale	<p>There are many cultural events that celebrate and recognise Indigenous Australians and their culture. For the NTPS to be a competitive employer and an employer of choice, we want to encourage all employees to celebrate Indigenous culture.</p>
How	<p>Agencies to recognise cultural days of significance, such as National Reconciliation Week and National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, and celebrate these in the workplace and/or support and encourage all employees to attend Indigenous cultural events.</p>
Success factors	<p>By demonstrating a respect for Indigenous culture, agencies raise the profile of Indigenous people and develop a reputation as an attractive employer and an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians.</p>

### **1.8 Amend the definition of merit in the *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* to value diversity in the workplace**

Rationale	Cabinet has approved a legislative amendment to the definition of merit in the <i>Public Sector Employment and Management Act</i> to include ‘the diversity that a person from the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) target group brings to the workplace’ as one further aspect of merit-based selection.
How	<p>The amendment will permit weight to be given to EEO diversity, while still adhering to the well-established principles of selection based on merit.</p> <p>Following legislative amendment to the Act, selection panels to give consideration to the diversity a person from an EEO target group brings to the specific workplace.</p>
Success factors	Future job descriptions are inclusive of Indigenous cultural identity.

### **1.9 Incorporate into executive contract officers’ annual performance reviews greater accountability in and a commitment to improving Indigenous employment outcomes in the NTPS, requiring executive contract officers to report on individual contributions and progress in this area**

Rationale	<p>A common theme in realising objectives outlined in strategies is a strong commitment at the executive and management level to achieve success. The NTG has made a commitment to increase and improve Indigenous employment outcomes in the NTPS, and agencies’ chief executives are responsible for facilitating this commitment on behalf of government.</p> <p>Executive contract officers’ employment is performance based. Including accountability of performance in improving Indigenous employment outcomes demonstrates a genuine commitment at the executive level.</p> <p>Revised Chief Executive Performance Agreement Guidelines and templates for 2009–2010 were distributed in April 2009.</p>
How	<p>The Commissioner for Public Employment to write to chief executives and executive contract officers advising that executive contract officer annual performance reviews will require greater accountability in and a commitment to improving Indigenous employment outcomes in the public sector.</p> <p>Agencies to amend executive contract officers’ annual performance review templates to incorporate improving Indigenous employment outcomes.</p>
Success factors	Greater accountability and commitment to improving Indigenous employment and career development in the NTPS at the executive level.

## 1.10 Examine agency operations to transfer urban and regional based public sector work to Territory Growth Towns

Rationale	<p>Traditionally a large percentage of NTPS service delivery to remote Indigenous communities has been provided from an urban and regional base, resulting in limited employment opportunities for remotely located people.</p> <p>In May 2009 the NTG unveiled 'Working Future' targeted to improve the lives of Territorians living in remote areas by encouraging real towns, real jobs and real opportunities.</p> <p>The Working Future initiative will provide a future for Indigenous Australians living in remote communities and will enhance infrastructure development, create jobs and bring Indigenous people into the Territory's broader economic development. This will see a fundamental shift in service delivery and infrastructure in remote communities.</p>
How	<p>Agencies to examine their operations to identify work that is currently urban and regional based and where possible transfer the work to communities.</p>
Success factors	<p>Real and local jobs for local people, and an opportunity for people to job-share so that they are able to meet cultural and family obligations.</p> <p>Strengthened reputation of the NTPS as an attractive employer and an employer of choice for Indigenous people.</p>



# Key focus area 2: attraction

## 2.1 Develop a whole-of-government Indigenous employment marketing strategy to attract Indigenous Australians to the NTPS

Rationale	<p>On a national level, COAG agreed in December 2007 to a partnership between all levels of government to work with Indigenous communities to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage. The <i>National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Economic Participation</i> (December 2008) will contribute to the COAG national target to halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within a decade. In the agreement there is also a commitment to increase Indigenous employment in public sectors to reflect national Indigenous working age population share by 2015.</p> <p>The Australian Employment Covenant is a national industry-led initiative that brings all Australians together to help close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in employment. The Covenant's aim is to create 50,000 Indigenous employment opportunities across Australia. The NTG has publicly supported the Covenant and has committed to providing 200 employment opportunities for Indigenous jobseekers in the NTPS.</p> <p>Evidence from the Australian Public Service Commission shows that centralised, targeted recruitment efforts have resulted in attracting and recruiting an increased number of Indigenous employees.</p> <p>A focused approach in the form of a whole-of-government marketing strategy to attract and recruit Indigenous Australians to the NTPS would capture the interest of Indigenous Australians through alternative and culturally preferred communication methods. A whole-of-government unified commitment and approach to increasing the rate of Indigenous employees in the NTPS would improve our profile.</p>
How	<p>Strategic Communications in the Department of the Chief Minister to lead consultations in the development of a whole-of-government Indigenous employment marketing strategy. The strategy will take into consideration using innovative methods of marketing and engagement with Indigenous Australians, including collaboration with Charles Darwin University (CDU), Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) and national and local Indigenous networks, and use of social networking tools to advertise job opportunities and promote the benefits of working in the NTPS.</p> <p>The marketing strategy will also consider how to promote job opportunities and pathway employment programs to Territory high schools, job services, registered training organisations and sporting organisations.</p> <p>Agencies to ensure that job descriptions and advertisements are written in plain English and designed to attract a wide range of suitable applicants. A consistent tag line to be used on all job vacancy advertisements.</p>
Success factors	<p>A wide range of Indigenous people receiving information on public sector employment opportunities, and an increase in the number of Indigenous people applying for job opportunities in the NTPS. Strengthened reputation of the NTPS as an attractive employer and an employer of choice for Indigenous people.</p>

## 2.2 Develop pathways to real jobs for Year 12 Indigenous school leavers and apprentices/trainees by matching successful applicants who have completed an employment program to ongoing employment opportunities across the NTPS

Rationale	<p>The NTPS recognises the need for innovative workforce planning interventions to ensure that it has the capability and capacity to deliver the appropriate level and quality of service, now and in the future. The public sector’s early career programs – traineeships and apprenticeships – is one of the workforce planning interventions developed to ensure we meet current needs and future challenges. It is best-practice recruitment and development designed to grow new generations of Territorians whose skills, knowledge and experience will help shape the social and economic future of the Territory.</p> <p>The NTG’s Apprenticeships Program provides Territorians with the opportunity to gain a qualification through structured employment and training in the NTPS. Apprenticeships can range from 12 months to three years. However, there is currently no guarantee of ongoing employment upon successful completion.</p> <p>Agencies invest considerable time and effort to ensure apprenticeships/ traineeships are successfully completed. Offering ongoing employment to successful Indigenous apprentices/trainees is a reward for completing their training and the opportunity to have a real job.</p>
How	<p>Indigenous apprentices/trainees who successfully complete the apprenticeship/traineeship to be offered ongoing employment by the host agency without advertising.</p>
Success factors	<p>Provision of ongoing employment for Indigenous people who enter the NTPS through the NTPS Apprenticeships Program, and retention of home-grown talent and capability.</p>

## 2.3 Encourage and support Indigenous students to take up careers in the NTPS through employment programs such as school-based apprenticeships, traineeships and Indigenous Cadetship Support

Rationale	<p>In 2008, the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment was approached by St John's College requesting work experience opportunities for Year 10 Indigenous boarding students from remote communities.</p> <p>The program has been well received by students, workplace supervisors, school counsellors and VET coordinators. All of the students said they would now consider a career in the NTPS, while two students indicated they would stay in school and complete Year 12 as a result of this experience.</p> <p>Work experience provides agencies with first-hand contact with future employees. It provides students with real experience in the workforce. Indigenous youth will be better informed of career choices available in the NTPS, including early career programs.</p> <p>Employment programs such as school-based apprenticeships, traineeships and Indigenous Cadetship Support complement the aims of the NTG's Smart Territory strategy.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to work with school careers advisers to develop a work experience program for Year 10 Indigenous students from remote areas, including those students who board at St John's College, Marrara Christian College, Kormilda College and St. Philip's College in Alice Springs.</p> <p>Practical information on employment programs such as school-based apprenticeships, traineeships and Indigenous Cadetship Support to be distributed to agencies to improve decision-making in workforce planning.</p>
Success factors	<p>Indigenous youth gain an insight into a variety of jobs offered in the NTPS including early career programs within the NTPS.</p>



## 2.4 Establish a whole-of-government Indigenous scholarship program specifically to encourage Indigenous people into non-traditional employment streams such as professional and technical streams

Rationale	<p>The acquisition of formal educational qualifications is one of the most commonly identified factors hindering or preventing Indigenous employees from moving into non-traditional employment streams in the public sector. Adequate representation of Indigenous people at all levels in the public sector is important to enable effective contribution to policy and decision-making affecting Indigenous Territorians. As of December 2009, there were 1581 employees who self-identified as Indigenous. Career progression for some Indigenous employees is stalled because of occupational qualification requirements.</p> <p>Improving Indigenous people's skills through a dedicated Indigenous scholarship program could potentially increase the representation of Indigenous employees in these employment streams.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to establish a whole-of-government Indigenous scholarship program to increase the representation of Indigenous people employed in the professional and technical streams of the public sector.</p>
Success factors	<p>Enhanced Indigenous workforce with the depth and breadth of skills and capabilities required for delivering targeted services and programs to Indigenous Territorians.</p>



## 2.5 Encourage agency participation in Adopt a School Program

Rationale	<p>The 'Adopt a School' concept is not new and there are many models – nationally and internationally – in operation. A common theme emerging from different models is that they are all successful in engaging young people in senior secondary school, i.e. Years 10, 11 and 12.</p> <p>The rationale for the establishment of an Adopt a School program in the NTPS is that we need to invest in the next generation of Indigenous Territorians because of the increasing skills shortages and we need to improve the employability of Indigenous young people.</p> <p>The fundamental aims of the program from our perspective are to generate links to our future Indigenous workforce, to increase knowledge of NTPS career pathways, and to support Indigenous students' interest in pursuing a career in the NTPS.</p> <p>The potential to use the program to engage Indigenous students and senior secondary schools in ways other than described is significant.</p> <p>The opportunities for NTPS agencies and their adopted schools to be creative about the extent of the partnership are endless.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to facilitate an NTPS Adopt a School program. NTPS agencies to be encouraged to adopt a school, and senior secondary schools to be encouraged to participate. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop a supportive framework that provides the policy for implementing the program and ideas and tips for establishing relationships with senior secondary schools and with Indigenous students.</p> <p>The Adopt a School program would bring schools, students and agencies together to complete a useful project. A project is normally completed within a school term or year, while some may last only a few days. Many projects benefit the school, agency and/or community or region. All projects give the young people more knowledge and skills in a particular industry.</p> <p>All participants learn more about each other and how they can help one another in future. Agencies learn how to work with schools and with today's young people. Students and schools learn more about career pathways and the skills employers want.</p>
Success factors	<p>Adopt a School program will increase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students' awareness of career paths, qualifications to move into their preferred career choice and early career opportunities in the NTPS</li><li>• Uptake of vocational education and training in senior secondary schools and beyond</li><li>• Effective communication and partnerships between senior secondary schools, their students and the NTPS.</li></ul>

## 2.6 Include in all selection criteria for NTPS vacancies the criterion: 'An ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures'

Rationale	<p>Selection criteria in job descriptions are statements that relate specifically to the proven abilities, skills and personal qualities required to achieve the outcomes of the job.</p> <p>The NTPS provides services to the community, and has a significant Indigenous and multicultural client base across the Territory. For this reason, it is proposed to include the above criterion to highlight the value and importance of knowledge of and communication with the Indigenous community.</p>
How	Agencies to ensure all selection criteria for NTPS vacancies include the criterion: 'An ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures'
Success factors	A workforce that acknowledges different cultures and ensures successful applicants have the ability to effectively interact with Indigenous Australians.



# Key focus area 3: retention

## 3.1 Recognise the achievements and contributions of Indigenous employees through the establishment of an Indigenous career ambassadors program

Rationale	<p>Establishing an Indigenous career ambassadors program in the NTPS will recognise the achievements of Indigenous employees and celebrate success. Such a program also promotes the benefits of Indigenous employment and inspires and motivates others to reach their full potential.</p> <p>This program may be modelled on the Australian Public Sector (APS) Indigenous Career Ambassadors Program. Indigenous ambassadors under this program act as role models to other Indigenous employees and willingly share their experiences of career progression and opportunities in the APS.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to establish a whole-of-government Indigenous career ambassadors program to celebrate and recognise excellence in the workplace and highlight the value of role models.</p>
Success factors	<p>The recognition of achievements and contributions of Indigenous employees and a group of role models/ambassadors that inspires others.</p>

## 3.2 Develop an Indigenous mentoring program and establish a network of trained mentors available to new and existing Indigenous employees

Rationale	<p>Mentoring programs have proved popular among Indigenous employees in many jurisdictions. Mentoring focuses on the person and support for individual growth.</p> <p>Effective mentoring has benefits for the mentor, mentee and the organisation, all of which contribute to recognising the importance of cultural identity and building an environment of mutual respect.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop and implement an Indigenous mentoring program on a cost recovery basis.</p> <p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to establish an online register of mentors.</p> <p>Agencies to encourage new and existing Indigenous employees to participate as mentors and mentees.</p>
Success factors	<p>Indigenous employees that achieve their full potential with the guidance of a skilled mentor. A network of trained mentors within the NTPS to assist and support Indigenous employees.</p>

### 3.3 Reinvigorate NTPS Indigenous leadership programs to accommodate the emerging needs of Indigenous employees, and consider alternative models of leadership development

Rationale	<p>In 2003–2004 and 2005–2006, the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment administered the Kigaruk Indigenous Men’s Leadership Development and the Lookrukin Indigenous Women’s Leadership Development programs. Successful applicants of these programs graduate with a Diploma in Business (Frontline Management).</p> <p>The intent of these programs was to provide an opportunity for Indigenous men and women to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to win promotions based on merit and to increase their effectiveness in their current positions.</p> <p>Research revealed that Frontline Management is no longer considered contemporary with the alternative of a Diploma of Management. It is proposed electives from the public sector training packages in the areas of policy development, service delivery, human resources, project management and community capacity be incorporated. This will address reported skill shortage areas across government.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to revamp the Kigaruk Indigenous Men’s Leadership Development and the Lookrukin Indigenous Women’s Leadership Development programs, building capacity in skill shortage areas within government.</p>
Success factors	<p>Indigenous employees that gain a qualification in management and have the necessary skills and knowledge to apply for and win promotions on merit. Indigenous employees who increase their effectiveness in their current positions and their ability to meet the emerging needs of the agency.</p>

### 3.4 Improve career progression of Indigenous employees across the public sector to enable effective contribution to policy and decision-making affecting Indigenous people

Rationale	<p>Adequate representation of Indigenous people at all levels within our public sector is important to enable effective contribution to policy and decision-making affecting Indigenous people.</p> <p>Increasing the participation of Indigenous employees in learning and development programs and initiatives will build confidence and capability across all designations and occupational groups.</p>
How	<p>Managers to encourage/facilitate Indigenous employees to participate in learning and development programs/initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discovery – Women as Leaders Program</li><li>• Lookrukin Indigenous Women’s Leadership Development Program</li><li>• Kigaruk Indigenous Men’s Leadership Development Program</li><li>• Machinery of Government: Governance, Institutions and Policy</li><li>• Machinery of Government: Selected Governance Perspectives</li><li>• Public Sector Management Program</li><li>• Studies Assistance Program</li><li>• Mobility within agency and/or sector wide.</li></ul> <p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop and implement CCC workshops – ‘Confidence, Career, Culture’ – to enhance self-development and aspirations.</p>
Success factors	<p>Increased number of Indigenous employees participating in learning and development programs/initiatives, and career progression achieving a more reflective demographic profile for the public sector.</p>

### 3.5 Develop agency-specific induction programs to acknowledge that new Indigenous employees may need additional workplace support to sensitively introduce them to a new and culturally unfamiliar environment

Rationale	Coming to terms with the NTPS workplace environment can be a challenge for any new recruit. For many Indigenous employees the workplace culture will be very different from their own culture and family experience, particularly in terms of language, social affinity, and family and community obligations.
How	<p>Agencies to be responsible for delivering culturally inclusive induction programs.</p> <p>Induction may cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to colleagues</li> <li>• Agency-specific information on roles, structure and functions of the whole agency, as well as particular work units</li> <li>• NTPS context – Code of Conduct, values</li> <li>• Working in the NTPS – our conditions and our expectations in relation to tasks and responsibilities</li> <li>• Professional development plans.</li> </ul>
Success factors	New Indigenous recruits feel welcomed and are equipped with useful information to assist them in the workplace.

### 3.6 Implement a buddy scheme where a new Indigenous employee is twinned with an appropriate support person in the workplace

Rationale	<p>Buddy programs have proved popular among Indigenous employees in many jurisdictions. Attending the workplace for the first time is a challenging and daunting experience for any new recruit. Providing new Indigenous recruits with a sense of support and a person they can turn to if they have any work-related concerns or problems can improve retention.</p> <p>A buddy program promotes a culture of inclusiveness.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to be responsible for developing buddy guidelines and checklists to assist agencies to implement a buddy program for new Indigenous recruits. New Indigenous recruits to be assigned a buddy on commencement in the workplace to ensure the new recruit feels welcomed and is ‘shown the ropes’ and the way around the workplace.</p> <p>The duration of a buddy relationship can be flexible and will depend on an individual’s needs and preferences.</p>
Success factors	Improved retention rates of new Indigenous recruits and a workplace that is inclusive and supportive.

# Key focus area 4: communication

## 4.1 Improve the integrity and provision of public sector employment data used for reporting on Indigenous workforce planning, development and profiling by nominating an annual census day to encourage Indigenous employees to self-identify

Rationale	<p>One of the biggest challenges facing almost all jurisdictions is data collection and reporting arrangements for Indigenous employment numbers within the public sector.</p> <p>Data is reliant on employees self-identifying as Indigenous.</p> <p>Workforce planning is about developing an understanding of the make-up of the current workforce, the environment in which it works and will work in the future, and necessary skills, capabilities and aptitudes that will be required to achieve business outcomes in an ever-changing environment. Workforce profiling depends on accurate data including workforce characteristics.</p> <p>Workforce planning informs workforce development strategies.</p>
How	<p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to determine an annual whole-of-government formal census day and develop marketing tools to promote the importance of accurate workforce data.</p> <p>Agencies to be responsible for organising activities to encourage employees who identify as Indigenous to update EEO details on myHR.</p> <p>Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to strengthen the provision of reporting on Indigenous workforce participation including Territory Growth Towns and to include performance of agency's efforts in Indigenous workforce planning and development in the annual State of the Service Report.</p>
Success factors	<p>Increased number of self-identifying Indigenous employees. More accurate representation of Indigenous employees, enabling the NTPS to monitor its progress against the target of at least 10 per cent by 2012 and improve workforce planning.</p>



#### **4.2 Establish an electronic register of Indigenous employees interested in receiving information on employment and career opportunities in the NTPS**

Rationale	On occasions agencies have made contact with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment seeking Indigenous people for various employment, training and professional development opportunities such as working parties, interview panels and focus groups. A central register of this nature will improve access to information and dissemination of Indigenous employment and career information.
How	Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop and maintain a register for Indigenous employees interested in Indigenous employment and career opportunities. Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop a communications strategy to promote the register across the NTPS and Indigenous networks.
Success factors	Greater representation of Indigenous employees on working parties and reference groups, and facilitation of greater career opportunities for Indigenous employees.

#### **4.3 Develop a communications and engagement strategy to promote the Indigenous Employees Network and the Indigenous Employment and Career Development (IECD) Coordinators Network**

Rationale	<p>The Indigenous Employees Network and the IECD Coordinators Network already exist in the NTPS. These networks provide opportunities for Indigenous employees to share knowledge and experiences, provide support, and be sounding boards.</p> <p>To ensure the networks are effective and accessible, their benefits and outcomes need to be promoted to the broader NTPS.</p>
How	Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop a communications and engagement strategy to promote the benefits of the Indigenous Employees and the IECD Coordinators networks.
Success factors	Vibrant and productive networks that are regularly accessed and engaged by Indigenous and non-Indigenous employees. Networks that are considered by agencies as 'bodies of expertise' on Indigenous employment in the NTPS.

#### 4.4 Improve communication and engagement with key stakeholders (CDU and BIITE, career advisers, job services and registered training organisations) to increase Indigenous employment in the public sector

Rationale	For the <i>Indigenous Employment and Career Development Strategy</i> to be effective there needs to be a partnership approach with key stakeholders. Maximising opportunities with key stakeholders to promote employment opportunities and public sector occupations will achieve employer-of-choice status for the NTPS with jobseekers.
How	Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to develop an overarching communications and engagement strategy.
Success factors	Well-established and productive partnerships and networks with key stakeholders to exchange information on a regular basis and explore opportunities to work together on Indigenous employment outcomes.  Better understanding of occupations in the NTPS.

#### 4.5 Promote employment opportunities and programs to attract BIITE and CDU Indigenous graduates to the NTPS

Rationale	The COAG national target is to halve the gap in employment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade. Attracting graduates, particularly from non-traditional disciplines, will improve the representation of Indigenous people across occupational groups within the NTPS.
How	Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment to lead further discussions on developing pathways to attract BIITE and CDU Indigenous graduates to NTPS job opportunities.  Department of Business and Employment, in partnership with Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, to be responsible for coordinating career information stands at BIITE and CDU graduation/open days.  Encourage BIITE and CDU to facilitate academic placements and work experience in the NTPS for Indigenous students.
Success factors	Increased number of BIITE and CDU Indigenous graduates applying for NTPS job opportunities.  Increased number of skilled Indigenous Australians accessing NTPS jobs.  BIITE and CDU work experience exchange/placements arranged.

